

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday August 8th 2021

Sean Ward Ei8EK Silent Key

Paul McGlinchey Ei2KX shares the sad news of the passing of Sean Ward Ei8EK. Sean was licensed in the early 1980s having entered Amateur Radio via 27MHz. He was the principal of St Marys boys school, Stranorlar. His interest in radio lay in antennas and propagation having gained many top DX awards along the way. His musical knowledge was immense, he was bandmaster of the Twin Towns and Donegal youth band simultaneously having started in Ballybofey in the 1960s. He will be fondly remembered by those of us lucky enough to have been taught by him and call him friend.

We shall now observe a minute's silence in memory of Sean Ward EI8EK

HAREC Exam date announced

The IRTS examination board is pleased to advise that the next HAREC examination will be held in the Maldron Hotel, Tallaght, Dublin 24 on Saturday the 11th of September.

There will be two examinations held on that date, a morning sitting commencing 10.30am and an afternoon sitting commencing 2pm. Each sitting will be two hours duration. The fee for the examination is 50 Euro and there is a concessionary rate of 25 Euro.

Full details can be found on the IRTS Website. Closing date for receipt of applications is Sunday the 29th of August. All details are subject to Covid regulations in force on the published date of the examination.

Dates and times will be read out again at the end of this bulletin, have pen and paper on the ready.

Shopping for ham radio equipment in Switzerland gets more complicated

In light of the disruption caused to the supply of radio equipment after Britain left the EU, experimenters in EchoIndia should keep an eye on other countries in mainland Europe. Ed Durrant DD5LP, reporting for USKA, the Swiss national amateur radio

society, writes that companies in countries outside the European Union are no longer being permitted to import electronics to customers in Switzerland unless those companies have a business affiliation within Switzerland. The use of a Swiss-based intermediary for companies in those nations became mandatory as of mid-July. Although Switzerland is not part of the European Union, a trade agreement exists between the EU and the Swiss government. The USKA's head of political lobbying, Willi Vollenweider HB9AMC, wrote on the website that the organisation considers this action "of strategic importance" to radio amateurs. Willi noted that the USKA hopes to petition the government, during its consultation period, on behalf of Swiss radio amateurs.

Club news

The South Eastern Amateur Radio Group EI2WRC will activate Hook Lighthouse ILLW Reference Number IE0003 on Saturday and Sunday the 21st and 22nd of August as part of the 24th International Lighthouse & Lightship weekend. For more info on the International Lighthouse & Lightship weekend please see www.illw.net

Hook Lighthouse is located on the South East coast of Ireland in Co. Wexford. The present structure is about 800 years old and is the oldest intact operational Lighthouse in the world. Hook Lighthouse offers guided tours of the lighthouse tower all year round and is one of the top things to do in Wexford and Waterford. For more information, please see www.hookheritage.ie

This event will take place providing that Government guidelines and restrictions at that time allow us to run the activation. Full social distancing and all other recommended procedures will be in place for the event. We look forward to speaking with you all on the 21st & 22nd of August 2021 from Hook Lighthouse, the oldest intact operational Lighthouse in the world for the 24th International Lighthouse & Lightship Weekend

For anyone that wishes to find out more about the South Eastern Amateur Radio Group and their activities you can drop them an email to [southeasternarg /at/ gmail.com](mailto:southeasternarg@atgmail.com) or please feel free to go along to any of their meetings. You can check their website www.searg.ie and you can also join them on Facebook and follow them on Twitter.

EI6JK is the leading EI operator in WRTC Standings

The World Radiosport Team Championship was conceived as an Olympic style competition among radio contesters, where teams of two compete from the same

locations using identical stations, thereby being a true test of operator skills. The championship is held every four years and is run over twenty four hours in conjunction with the IARU HF Championships on the second full weekend in July. The first WRTC was held in Seattle in 1990, San Francisco in 1996, Bled, in Slovenia in 2000, Helsinki, in Finland in 2002, Brazil in 2006, Moscow in 2010, New England, in the USA in 2014, and the last one was in Germany in 2016. The next event was scheduled for Italy in 2022 but this has already been postponed to 2023 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A qualification for participation in WRTC 2022 is achieved by an operator's results over any 12 contests out of a specified twenty-four, held between November 2019 and November 2020. Our Congratulation go to Mark EI6JK, who is now the leading EI contender from a list of fifty-four. Making up the top five were Neil EI3JE, Mark EI3KD, Dan EI3JZ and John EI8IR. Full results are available on wrtc2022.it

DX spot

As reported last week, ZL1AAO is active as E51AAO from several of the South Cook Islands until the 19 of August.

Bo, OZ1DJJ, is on Tasiilaq Island using the callsign OX3LX between until the 13th of August. He will be found mainly on 6m and 4m but will also be on some of the HF bands. QSL via OZ0J.

Sergey UT8UU is operating as 5H3UU is still active from Tanzania until the end of this week, keep an eye on dx spots for him.

Contesting

The MMonVHF and DUBUS 144 MHz Meteorscatter sprint contest starts at 1500Z on the 11th of August and runs until the 13th of August, ending at 1459Z. This contest is not for the casual operator, for less than 1.5kw ERP is considered QRP. Browse their website at www.mmonvhf.de for more details.

To operate the other end of the power spectrum, digital contender should have a look at www.ft8activity.eu for details on the upcoming ft8 european activity contest this wednesday coming.

The Propagation Horoscope

Indian astronomers have found an explanation why the rotation profile of the Sun changes sharply in some latitudes. It has long been known that the sun's equator spins faster than the poles. An article in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society shows how the slight difference in temperature between solar poles and equator is balanced by the centrifugal force appearing due to solar differential rotation.

A view into the internal rotation of the sun using sound waves reveals the existence of a layer where its rotation profile changes sharply. This is called the near-surface shear layer and exists very close to the solar surface, where there is an outward decrease in angular velocity. Understanding this shear layer is crucial for understanding of solar phenomena like sunspot formation, and the solar cycle.

And this new insight may very well inform predictions that solar cycle 25 is heating up faster than expected. The latest sign may be found in sunspot counts from July 2021. Continuing a trend that started last year, they overperform the official forecast issued by the NOAA/NASA Solar Cycle 25 Prediction Panel in 2019.

The official forecast calls for Solar Cycle 25 to peak in July 2025. However, a better fit to current data shows Solar Cycle 25 peaking in October 2024. This is just outside the 8-month error bars of the panel's forecast.

July 2021 was a remarkable month. Solar Cycle 25 crossed multiple thresholds, including its first X-flare and, at one point there were six sunspots on the solar disk. The last time so many sunspots were seen at the same time was during September 2017.

One farside coronal mass ejection in July was so strong it affected Earth despite being on the "wrong" side of the sun, a full circular shockwave was observed, and a handful of other CMEs narrowly missed our planet.

Inspite of all the solar activity last month, the start of August turned out to be rather quiet, at the time of writing the solar flux is 72 and an A-index of 4, meaning a quiet sun and the same average conditions as reported last week. No radio blackouts are expected and no significant active region flare activity is forecast. Also, the currently unsettled weather without any notable high pressure zone in sight makes for a poor tropo forecast, but reasonably good conditions have been reported for both the 10 and 6 meter bands in the past week.

Repetition of the Harec Exam Announcement

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That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam at irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Thursday.

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